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ABSTRACT

One of the recommendations of the Visiting Committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to Nova Southeastern University during its accreditation process was that the University should demonstrate that the number of part-time faculty members teaching in its graduate programs is not excessive. In response to this recommendation, a study was undertaken to identify postbaccalaureate enrollment at the University and then to identify the percentage of instruction offered by full-time and part-time faculty. Various data sources were used, including enrollment statistics, staffing and information from faculty matrix reports from the academic centers, the University Fact Book, and other University resources. Approximately 75% of all enrollment at the University is in an academic center devoted exclusively to postbaccalaureate instruction. The employment of new full-time faculty assigned to academic centers exclusively offering postbaccalaureate programs is growing at twice the rate of the increased enrollment in postbaccalaureate programs. Full-time faculty members taught more course sections in the 1997 fall term than did their part-time counterparts. These findings are in accord with the University's emphasis on the adult learner. An appendix contains data tables. (Contains 7 tables and 13 references.) (SLD)

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POST-BACCALAUREATE EDUCATION AT NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nova Southeastern University is currently engaged in the processes needed for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As part of this process, the University is compelled to respond to all Visiting Committee recommendations, including the recommendation that:

> The committee recommends that Nova Southeastern University demonstrate that the number of part-time faculty members teaching in its graduate programs is not excessive (*Criteria*; p. 49, lines 26-30).

The purpose of this report is to identify post-baccalaureate enrollment at the University and to then further identify the percentage of post-baccalaureate instruction offered by full-time and part-time faculty.

Various information resources were used to prepare this report: enrollment statistics were obtained from Research and Planning's Weekly Enrollment Reports; staffing and information about course sections were gained from sets of faculty matrix reports prepared by academic center directors; the University's Fact Book, the Fact Book for all 24 institutions associated with the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, and *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System* fall enrollment statistics were used to obtain state-wide comparative statistics; resources prepared by the United States Department of Education were used to offer a sense of post-baccalaureate enrollment at the national level.

By reviewing these materials, it became evident that the University is quite unique in regard to the level of post-baccalaureate instruction offered:

- Consistently, approximately 75 percent of all enrollment at the University is in an academic center devoted exclusively to post-baccalaureate instruction.
- The employment of new full-time faculty assigned to academic centers exclusively offering post-baccalaureate programs is growing at twice the rate as the increased enrollment in post-baccalaureate programs.
- In contrast to the Visiting Committee's statement about over-use of part-time faculty, full-time faculty teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught more course sections during Fall Term 1997 than their part-time counterparts.

- Post-baccalaureate enrollment is far more common in Florida's independent colleges and universities than the State University System or at the national level.

- Most post-baccalaureate students at the University are enrolled on a part-time basis and this finding is in general parity with national trends.

By placing an emphasis on the adult learner, the University has been able to develop a comprehensive selection of post-baccalaureate programs in business, computer and information sciences, education, health professions, law, oceanography, psychology, and social and systemic studies. These post-baccalaureate programs have contributed greatly to the University's rapid growth and they are also largely responsible for the University's ranking as the 16th largest independent university in the United States.

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BACKGROUND

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment

Although Nova Southeastern University offers undergraduate programs throughout Florida and selected international locations, post-baccalaureate programs dominate enrollment at the University. As noted in *Nova Southeastern University Fact Book* (1995, p. 38), enrollment at the post-baccalaureate level has consistently represented 70 to 80 percent of all enrollment at the University since 1976. During Fall Term 1997, 74.4 percent of all enrollment (*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1997, Form EF-1*, 1997) at the University was at the post-baccalaureate level (Table 1).

Purpose of This Report

The University is currently engaged in the processes needed for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As part of this process, the University is compelled to respond to all Visiting Committee recommendations (Simpson; 1996, p. 148), including the recommendation that:

> The committee recommends that Nova Southeastern University demonstrate that the number of part-time faculty members teaching in its graduate programs is not excessive (*Criteria*; p. 49, lines 26-30).

The purpose of this report is to identify the level of post-baccalaureate enrollment at the University and to then further identify the percentage of post-baccalaureate instruction offered by full-time and part-time faculty. To offer context, comparisons on post-baccalaureate enrollment were made to other independent colleges and universities in Florida, to institutions in Florida's State University System, and to other post-secondary institutions at the national level.

METHODOLOGY

A listing of information resources used to prepare this report on post-baccalaureate enrollment at the University includes the following:

- Fall Term 1997 enrollment statistics are found in *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1997, Form EF-1* (1997), part of the series of annual and biennial surveys submitted to the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.

- End of Fall Term 1997 enrollment statistics were obtained from *Nova Southeastern University Research and Planning Weekly Enrollment Report*. (January 5, 1998).

- Faculty staffing and information about course sections were gained from sets of faculty matrix reports prepared by academic center directors.

- *Nova Southeastern University Fact Book* (1997), *Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida Fact Book* (1998), and *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1996, Form EF-1* (1996) were used to obtain state-wide comparative statistics.

- The United States Department of Education's *Digest of Education Statistics 1996* (1996) was used to offer a sense of post-baccalaureate enrollment at the national level.

All resources provide an excellent source of extant data that undergo a close degree of review and scrutiny.

RESULTS

Approximately 75 percent of all enrollment at the University during the last few years is in an academic center offering programs exclusively at the post-baccalaureate level (Table 1). Cognate to this enrollment statistic, an analysis of the Fall Term 1997 faculty matrix reports provided evidence that 86 percent of all full-time faculty at the University are assigned to an academic center offering programs exclusively at the post-baccalaureate level.

Further review of Table 1 and Table 2 indicates that post-baccalaureate enrollment outpaces enrollment at the undergraduate level:

- Instruction at the post-baccalaureate level is the dominant type of instruction at NSU and enrollment in post-baccalaureate programs is growing at a rate that is substantially greater than enrollment in undergraduate programs. From Fall Term 1995 to Fall Term 1997, undergraduate enrollment grew by approximately 10 percent, while post-baccalaureate enrollment grew by 15 percent during this same period.

- The employment of new full-time faculty assigned to academic centers exclusively offering post-baccalaureate programs is growing at twice the rate as the increased enrollment in post-baccalaureate programs.
    - From Fall Term 1995 to Fall Term 1997, post-baccalaureate enrollment grew by 15 percent.
    - During this same period, the employment of new full-time faculty with primary responsibilities in post-baccalaureate academic centers grew by 30 percent.

An analysis of the Fall Term 1997 faculty matrix reports confirms that part-time faculty teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught fewer course sections during Fall Term 1997 than their full-time counterparts (Table 3):

- During Fall Term 1997, part-time faculty teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught 47.7 percent of all course sections (N = 783 course sections).
- The remaining 52.3 percent of all post-baccalaureate course sections were taught by full-time faculty and administrators:
    - During Fall Term 1997, full-time faculty teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught 48.1 percent of all course sections (N = 788 course sections).
    - During Fall Term 1997, administrators, in their occasional role as teachers, taught 4.2 percent of all course sections (N = 69 course sections.

These staffing statistics are consistent with observations from Winter Term 1997 (*An Analysis of Nova Southeastern University's Winter Term 1997 Faculty Matrix*; 1997, p.10):

- During Winter Term 1997, full-time employees of the University teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught 53.7 percent of all course sections (N = 926 course sections).
- During Winter Term 1997, part-time faculty teaching at the post-baccalaureate level taught 46.3 percent of all course sections (N = 798 course sections).

The Representation of Full-Time Faculty and Part-Time Faculty at Nova Southeastern University by Academic Center and by Degree Level: Winter Term 1997 (1997, p. 17) addressed cumulative registrations as another enrollment statistic. By using this enrollment

statistic, full-time faculty at the post-baccalaureate level have far more contact with students than their part-time peers:

- During Winter Term 1997, 59.7 percent of all post-baccalaureate student enrollment (cumulative registrations) in standard courses at the University during Winter Term 1997 were taught by faculty who are full-time employees of the University.

- During Winter Term 1997, 40.3 percent of all post-baccalaureate student enrollment (cumulative registrations) in standard courses at the University during Winter Term 1997 were taught by faculty who are part-time employees of the University.

SUMMARY

Unlike most colleges and universities with post-baccalaureate programs, post-baccalaureate instruction was offered first at Nova Southeastern University. The University did not offer its own undergraduate program until nearly ten years after the charter class of 17 graduate students first enrolled. Further, in adherence to its Mission Statement, the University recognizes the importance of the adult learner and in turn offers programs at the post-baccalaureate level that accommodate the time and place needs of this growing market. In its less than 35-year history, attention to the post-baccalaureate needs of the adult learner has contributed to the University's growth as the 16th largest independent university in the United States (*Research and Planning Highlights*, 1997)).

Accordingly, it is not surprising that post-baccalaureate education at the University is far greater than any other Florida institution in terms of relative or absolute presence. Using Table 1, Table 4, and Table 5 as references:

- The five leading Florida institutions with relative representation of post-baccalaureate education are:

  - Nova Southeastern University . . . . . 74 % of Enrollment
  - Florida Institute of Technology . . . . . 55 % of Enrollment
  - Saint Thomas University . . . . . 50 % of Enrollment
  - Stetson University . . . . . 33 % of Enrollment
  - Barry University . . . . . 32 % of Enrollment

- The five leading Florida institutions with the largest post-baccalaureate enrollment are:
  - Nova Southeastern University . . . . . 11,049 Students
  - University of Florida . . . . . 9,855 Students
  - University of South Florida . . . . . 9,273 Students
  - Florida State University . . . . . 6,849 Students
  - Florida International University . . . . . 5,998 Students

As a percentage of total enrollment, post-baccalaureate enrollment is far more common in Florida's independent colleges and universities than the State University System or at the national level:

- Post-baccalaureate enrollment represented 30 percent of all enrollment in Florida's independent colleges and universities during Fall Term 1997 (*Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida Fact Book*, 1998).
- In contrast, post-baccalaureate enrollment represented 21 percent of all enrollment in Florida's State University System during Fall Term 1996 (*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1996, Form EF-1*, 1996).

Table 6 and Table 7 provide the opportunity to compare the degree of post-baccalaureate education at the University to the nation's other post-secondary institutions:

- While post-baccalaureate enrollment accounts for approximately 75 percent of all enrollment at the University, at the national level only 14 percent of all post-secondary students were enrolled at the post-baccalaureate level.
- Most post-baccalaureate students at the University are enrolled on a part-time basis and this finding is in general parity with national trends.
  - At NSU during Fall Term 1997, 58 percent of all post-baccalaureate students were enrolled on a part-time basis and 42 percent were enrolled on a full-time basis.
  - At the national level during Fall Term 1994, 52 percent of all post-baccalaureate students were enrolled on a part-time basis and 48 percent were enrolled on a full-time basis.

Although the University has a long history of anticipating the needs of the adult learner and in turn developing programs and delivery formats to met their needs, many other institutions are only just beginning to address the needs of this group. Syverson (1997, p. 1), representing the Council of Graduate Schools, noted that:

> As graduate schools face an ever changing set of national, state, and institutional demands, the students that are applying for and enrolling in our graduate programs are changing as well. The traditional view of graduate students as newly-minted bachelor's-degree recipients engaged full-time in graduate study is contradicted by the data described below. [t]he decided majority of students pursuing graduate study are quite different than the traditional student -- they are older, more often women, typically married, and have family and career responsibilities.

By placing an emphasis on the adult learner, the University has been able to develop a comprehensive selection of post-baccalaureate programs in business, computer and information sciences, education, health professions, law, oceanography, psychology, and social and systemic studies. These post-baccalaureate programs have contributed greatly to the University's rapid growth and they are also largely responsible for the University's ranking as the 16th largest independent university in the United States.

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Table 1

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at Nova Southeastern University: Fall Term 1995 to Fall Term 1997

Level of Instruction	Fall Term 1995		Fall Term 1996		Fall Term 1997		Change: 1995-1997	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Undergraduate	3,688	26.4	3,902	26.1	4,040	25.6	352	9.5
Post-Baccalaureate	10,253	73.6	11,049	73.9	11,742	74.4	1,489	14.5
TOTAL	13,941		14,951		15,782		1,841	13.2

Table 2

Growth of Full-Time Faculty at Nova Southeastern University from Fall Term 1995 to Fall Term 1997: Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Level

	Full-Time Faculty at NSU				
	Undergraduate		Post-Baccalaureate		
Term	N	%	N	%	Total
Fall 1995	53	16	285	84	338
Winter 1996	54	16	289	84	343
Fall 1996	54	16	293	84	347
Winter 1997	55	14	332	86	387
Fall 1997	61	14	371	86	432
Change: Fall 1995					N 94
Fall 1997	8	15	86	30	% 28

Note. This listing is restricted exclusively to full-time faculty, identified in the faculty matrix reports prepared by center directors as *Faculty Affiliation Code* = 1.

Table 3

Post-Baccalaureate Course Sections at Nova Southeastern University by Faculty Employment Status: Fall Term 1997

	Course Sections					
Faculty Status	**N**	**%**	**Mode**	**Median**	**Mean**	**SD**
Full-Time Faculty	788	48.1	2	2	2.1	1.7
Administrator	69	4.2	1	1	1.3	1.2
Part-Time Faculty	783	47.7	1	1	1.7	1.0
TOTAL	1,640	100.0	1	1	1.7	1.0

Note. Data are from the collective set of faculty matrix listings prepared during Fall Term 1997 by academic center directors.

Table 4

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida: Fall Term 1997

	Undergraduate		Post-Baccalaureate		
Institution	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**Total**
Barry University	4,685	68	2,214	32	6,899
Bethune-Cookman College	2,523	100	0	0	2,523
Clearwater Christian College	603	100	0	0	603
Eckerd College	1,443	100	0	0	1,443
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	9,810	80	2,413	20	12,223
Flagler College	1,655	100	0	0	1,655
Florida College	396	100	0	0	396
Florida Institute of Technology	1,843	45	2,292	55	4,135
Florida Memorial College	1,643	100	0	0	1,643
Florida Southern College	2,681	98	55	2	2,736
Jacksonville University	1,857	86	300	14	2,157
Lynn University	1,638	92	144	8	1,782
Nova Southeastern University	4,040	26	11,742	74	15,782
Palm Beach Atlantic College	1,629	84	303	16	1,932
Ringling School of Art and Design	853	100	0	0	853
Rollins College	2,656	79	712	21	3,368
Saint Leo College	7,188	97	215	3	7,403
Saint Thomas University	1,102	50	1,101	50	2,203
Southeastern College	1,069	100	0	0	1,069
Stetson University	1,908	67	949	33	2,857

Table 4

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida: Fall Term 1997

	Undergraduate		Post-Baccalaureate		
Institution	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**Total**
University of Tampa	2,334	81	562	19	2,896
Warner Southern College	646	100	0	0	646
Webber College	413	96	18	4	431
TOTAL	54,615	70	23,020	30	77,635

Note. Of all 24 institutions affiliated with the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, data for Edward Waters College were not provided.

Data are from *Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida Fact Book* (1998) and are based on enrollment statistics reported annually to the United States Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1997, Form EF-1*, 1997).

Table 5

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at Florida's State University System Universities: Fall Term 1996

Institution	Undergraduate N	Undergraduate %	Post-Baccalaureate N	Post-Baccalaureate %	Total
University of Florida	30,008	75.3	9,855	24.7	39,863
University of South Florida	26,993	74.4	9,273	25.6	36,266
Florida State University	23,305	77.3	6,849	22.7	30,154
Florida International University	23,722	79.8	5,998	20.2	29,720
University of Central Florida	22,767	82.2	4,917	17.8	27,684
Florida Atlantic University	14,650	80.9	3,461	19.1	18,111
University of North Florida	9,001	83.1	1,837	16.9	10,838
Florida A&M University	9,630	90.3	1,037	9.7	10,667
University of West Florida	6,224	79.2	1,632	20.8	7,856
TOTAL	166,300	78.8	44,859	21.2	211,159

Note. Data are from *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment Survey 1996, Form EF-1.*

Table 6

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at Nova Southeastern University by Full-Time and Part-Time Enrollment Status: End of Fall Term 1997

Level and Enrollment Status	N	%
Undergraduate		
Full-Time Enrollment Status	2,800	64
Part-Time Enrollment Status	1,567	36
Undergraduate Sub-Total	4,367	26
Post-Baccalaureate		
Full-Time Enrollment Status	5,142	41
Part-Time Enrollment Status	7,360	59
Post-Baccalaureate Sub-Total	12,502	74
TOTAL	16,869	100

Note. Data are from the end of Fall Term 1997. Enrollment at this time is greater than the previously reported N = 15,782, which was enrollment in mid-November 1997 at the time the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics mandates the collection of *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System* statistics. By using this later enrollment statistic, all instructional activities for the term are included, offering a complete presentation of undergraduate and pos-baccalaureate instruction during this term.

Table 7

Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment at All Post-Secondary Institutions in the United States by Full-Time and Part-Time Enrollment Status: Fall Term 1994

Level and Enrollment Status	N	%
Undergraduate		
Full-Time Enrollment Status	7,169,000	58
Part-Time Enrollment Status	5,094,000	42
Undergraduate Sub-Total	12,263,000	86
Post-Baccalaureate		
Full-Time Enrollment Status	969,311	48
Part-Time Enrollment Status	1,047,402	52
Post-Baccalaureate Sub-Total	2,016,713	14
TOTAL	14,279,713	100

Note. Data are from *Digest of Education Statistics 1996* (1996).

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